

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 273

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 273 was a bill introduced by Senator Schrock. (Read title.) Bill was introduced on January 5 of this year, referred to the Agriculture Committee for public hearing. The bill was advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments, Mr. President. (AM0230, Legislative Journal page 546.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Schrock, you're recognized to open on the advancement of LB 273.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, about two and a half years ago I attended an NCSL conference in Quebec and one of the breakout sessions the presenter was Representative Cynthia Thielen, who is a member of the Hawaii Legislature. She said they were searching for an alternative crop in Hawaii because of the labor intensive problems of growing pineapple and sugarcane, and those products had moved to countries where there was cheap labor and they were no longer viable crops in Hawaii and they were looking at industrial hemp. LB 273 is a bill that would provide for the cultivation of industrial hemp. I've often learned in my life if something seems too good to be true it probably is, but I think this is an issue we need to take a look at and I'm going to go through a list here of things that you may or may not know. The Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution were both drafted on paper made from hemp. Now, the Lincoln paper disputed that, but I will tell you they were drafted. They aren't...the documents you see now aren't necessarily the documents that were printed on hemp, but our constitutional fathers were drafting those documents on paper made out of hemp. Betsy Ross made the first American flag out of hempen. That's a canvas, a word derived from cannabis. There is no U.S. law prohibiting the growing of hemp, only Depart...Drug Enforcement Agency (sic--Administration) regulations. Hemp is lawfully grown in 32 nations, and in the European Union it is a subsidized crop. Now I will tell you we are probably the only industrialized nation where it is illegal to grow industrial hemp. The industrial hemp crop or plant requires little, if any, fertilizer, no pesticides, and if watered shortly after planting is drought tolerant for the remainder of its maturation cycle. The plant we are proposing to legalize does not have